



Department of Conservation and Recreation
Stewardship Council Meeting
February 1, 2008
Lynn Heritage State Park, Lynn, MA

Meeting Minutes

Stewardship Councilors in Attendance: Chairman Dick Cross, Councilors, Julian Agyeman, Whitney Hatch, Christina Crowley, Henry Lee and Laura Johnson.

Public Attendees: Heidi Ricci, Mass Audubon; Sharl Heller, Friends of Myles Standish State Forest; A. Richard Miller, Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee; Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhood; Mike Ryan, Friends of Fells; Dan Streeter, North Shore NEMBA; Bill Boles, Wompatuck Friends and NEMBA; Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhood; Renata Von Tschar, Charles River Conservancy; Julie Crockford, Emerald Necklace Conservancy; Jill A. Miller, Natick Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and Melissa Peters, Tufts University.

DCR Staff in Attendance: Commissioner Rick Sullivan, Gary Briere, Marianne Fleckner, Stephanie Cooper, Jeff Daley, Suzanne Wilson, Joe Rotondo, and Marcelle Valentin.

I. **Call To Order (13:10), Councilor Cross**

- a. Councilor Cross welcomed everyone. Mentioned how pleased he is with the great strides of the OHV Enforcement group and DCR. Introduced Commissioner Sullivan.

II. **Commissioner's Report, Commissioner Rick Sullivan**

- a) Commissioner Sullivan greeted the Stewardship Council and audience. He informed the council that Leslie Luchonek has resigned and currently our Bureau Chief of Project Design & Management, Joe Orfant is in charge of refilling this position. We are actively posting this position. The Commissioner informed all that we are moving forward with the RMP while we are looking for someone to fill Leslie's shoes.
- b) Commissioner Sullivan informed all that the crews continued repairs to the drainage system throughout January in the Storow Drive tunnel. He also mentioned that DCR is establishing a thorough community outreach plan to inform the public of the traffic management alternatives and construction impacts during the rehabilitation. We are carefully sequencing the work to ensure the loud noise is targeted during the day and not the night hours.
- c) The preliminary interim inspection of the Longfellow Bridge is now complete, which began back in August 2007. On January 18, DCR announced a ban of all commercial trucks and buses from the high speed lanes of the Longfellow Bridge until full repairs are completed. At the conclusion of repairs, the bridge will undergo a final inspection to ensure all work has been satisfactorily completed.
- d) Commissioner Sullivan pointed out that the Governor's budget has been submitted and that you will see an eight percent increase for the DCR budget. Included in the budget increase from the Governor are two positions for the Resource Management department, once fully staffed the agency can move forward on the baseline information then more expansive plans as we progress. He stated that the goal is to help DCR be fully staffed to move further improve our park systems and work toward being one park system. Commissioner Sullivan briefly discussed the change in the management and organizational structure, i.e. Planning & Engineering department now reports to the Operations department under Jack Murray, Deputy Commissioner of Operations. The focus is for the agency to work as one park system and the realignment of some of the departments helps for decisions to come from an operational point

of view including finance decisions for all areas from the agency to come through the finance department under the directive of Marianne Fleckner. The Commissioner mentioned the importance of the agency to work as one unit and informed the council and public that all of senior staff met with all of the District Managers to hear their presentations on various important topics in the field. It was the first time for District Managers to be able to express the importance of their job, the educational piece and being on the same page with senior staff on a lot of priorities. It was great to meet the District Managers and working toward centralization instead of silos within the agency. Planning to have additional leadership programs with the field staff.

Comments:

- a) Councilor Cross mentioned some of the resumes received from the western state that the Commissioner had given to the council to review. The resumes go to the Governor and ultimately appoint the new council members but the council does review and give comments.

III.

Committee Updates

a. Finance Committee, *Councilor Hatch*

- a) Councilor Hatch gave a brief report on the budget regarding two items that the finance committee is now focusing on. Namely what position to take relative to the budget and a bond bill in which the council needs to discuss and decide what we want as a council to do in regards to the bond bill, including probably signing on to a coalition that if forming to support the bond bill.
- b) Councilor Hatch discussed the House II budget and reiterated what Commissioner Sullivan stated of the budget being a definite improvement over what was actually asked for in the letter submitted in regards to the spending plans to Executive Administration & Finance and the Governor. The major areas of increase are in the state and urban parks system and in addition House II had given an increase of \$2.3 million in the Retained revenue account.
- c) He discussed the Stewardship Council's concern with the legislature in regards to securing funding on new money on the administrative side on the main admin account on positions which were original positions discussed when the council was formed. Councilor Hatch also discussed the Watershed management on permitting; there is a re-permitting exercise that must be done every 10 years and agency was trying to bring out contracts to help deal with the weight of the permitting there maybe a shortfall or a mismatch between what will be demanded of the agency and the resources they have to that. These were items in their review. Councilor Hatch suggested in a couple of weeks pull the committee and council members together and ask Marianne to help make sure they are on track and what are their weak spots in regards to the House II budget; then work on a letter to send to the House Ways and Means Chair in respect of their reaction to House II. He would also like to suggest the finance committee to review and pick apart the Bond Bill and figure out what they really want to weigh in as the Stewardship Council.

b. Resource Management Plan Committee, Discussion on status of RMPs, *Jeff Daley*

- a) Jeff Daley, Senior Policy Advisor gave an update where the RMP stands, as noted earlier by Commissioner Sullivan; Leslie Luchonek has resigned and will be leaving at the end of the month and we wish him well on his endeavors. He is leaving this process and project in good hands with Joe Orfant, Andy Bachman and the others on the RMP committee so it will not get derailed, we are looking to push forward as well work on filling the backfill of the position. We just had a meeting last Thursday with the Priscilla Geigis, Sam Overton and Jack Murray about getting their groups involved now and to inform their staff. We will be asking their managers and supervisors to participate in surveys as we begin to gather data.

Mr. Daley mentioned that they are putting ahead an eight to ten month timeframe to have basic levels of assessments to present to the council. We will be starting on the 1st week of February to start moving forward getting the surveys together and getting them out to the field. We are hoping to have gathered some surveys to give a progress report to present to the council in March. We are also collecting existing GIS, maps and current data on all or properties statewide, focusing on 100 - 250 locations that are considered delinquent management units that we do not have enough or any data that will not currently enable us to project what kind of staffing, funding and other needs until we gather this information. Mr. Daley assured the council and public that this is moving forward and being worked on vigorously. The goal of these plans is to have them as active working management plans that can be used for 20 - 30 years also focusing on planning for the future.

c. Policy Committee, *Julian Agyeman*

- a) Councilor Agyeman followed on the policy criteria for trails enforcement and regards to the report Gary Briere and the OHV Enforcement group worked on and a request to take the report to flesh out more on enforcement. There was concern in regards to enforcement and no substitution to boots on the ground. Councilor Agyeman had a student of his, Melissa Peters from Tufts University work with Gary Briere researching substitutions of enforcement outside of boots on the ground that can be useful. He introduced Melissa
- b) Melissa Peters gave a Power Point presentation on the research done on innovative approaches OHV Enforcement, such as high technology to track illegal usage of OHVs. Miss Peters discussed various ways of enforcement in content of research approach, general findings, technology – based enforcement options (i.e. GPS, license plate recognition systems, radio frequency identification tags), challenges and traditional enforcement options (i.e. education, mapping and signage, revise land use decisions, reporting, increase fees for violations, officers and identification and enforcement on private lands). Miss Peters conclusions touched are:
 - Technology is not currently used for OHV enforcement but exists.
 - Its transferability to DCR OHV enforcement is complex; there are political, legal, and economic barriers.
 - Technology is not a catch-all solution; however, it is important to begin dialogue on potential ways to apply the technology.
 - It would allow for more effective tracking. If technology reveals patterns of times/dates of illegal activity, officers can employ targeted patrols and effectively identify violators.
- c) The recommendations Ms. Peters stated was since there is no one solution to improve OHV enforcement, DCR should consider a comprehensive approach. The following are recommendations that should be used in conjunction with each other:
 - *OHV Information.* Expand number and distribution of maps and brochures to identify designated trails and routes. Increase signage, in person warnings, and persecution of repeat violators.
 - *OHV Education.* Work with OHV clubs and organizations to promote safe, legal, and ethical use of OHVs.
 - *OHV Law Enforcement.* Increase number of targeted patrols in high use, high violation, and sensitive areas.

- *OHV Riding Areas.* There is a great need for more legal, sustainable, and accessible areas to ride. DCR can work with private property owners to expand current trail system.
 - *OHV Technology.* DCR lands can serve as a pilot study to test the feasibility of advanced technology
- d) Q&A followed. Gary Briere informed the council that he will be sharing the Power Point presentation with the OHV Enforcement group and he will report out their comments.

IV. **Off-Highway Vehicle Enforcement Group Update, Bureau Chief Recreation, Gary Briere**

- I. Gary Briere first thanked Melissa on the great job on her research and enjoyed working with her the last few months. He gave a brief update, mentioned at the last OHV enforcement meeting he requested comments from all committee members to put together to share with subcommittee members. He gave them a couple days to review the changes in the document. Once the document is shared with the council, there will be notes to areas where there were disagreements. There are broad agreements in 40 areas that can be signed off on in the document. The document reflects the areas of agreements where participants were comfortable with signing off on from working groups. In the next few months more clarity and changes to come, then we will be able to give legislative recommendations. This will be in April. There will be an update on the comments from the subcommittees at the next meeting.

V. **Approval of Minutes from November 2, 2007 and January 4, 2008**

- i. Council members decided to defer approval of the minutes to next Stewardship Council meeting in March.

VI. **Public Comment**

a. **A. Richard Miller**, Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee

- i. Mentioned his Power Point presentation from the last meeting in January regarding the high rise apartments that been developed against Lake Cochituate state park and in regards to zoning there is new equipment there and there will be Zoning Boards appeal on February 4th also mentioned how developer would like to know how he could cooperate. The 2nd date is also February 4th a closing date for a new trial policy for matching grants for DCR grants for projects on state park properties, a two to one match grants instead of the 50% at best match. Very pleased about this. On February 13th the Cochituate state park advisory committee having annual visit with the state legislatures and two co-chairs from the Natural Resources and Agriculture to have a discussion on the park system and Lake Cochituate. Asked if someone from the agency or council can get back to him by the end of this week with information that they can present to legislature.

b. **Dan Streeter**, North Shore NEMBA

- i. Main area of interest is on the trail maintenance and stewardship at the parks and commented how important for the average guy is the resource management plans and would like to know of any updated RMPs. Any of the parks you go to volunteers are using prior RMPs that are 30 years old which are not reflective to the current conditions activity know like forestry and management. He encourages create a progress report of where we are at with RMP and look forward to get involved and participate in the process.

c. **Bill Boles**, Wompatuck Friends and NEMBA

- i. Had one concern he wanted to discuss, ORV. Some years ago ORVs were allowed through Myles Standish State Forest. He was part of a group six to eight years ago that made recommendations to the state for future plans for ORVs in Myles Standish. Today

there are more illegal ORV trails running through the forest in Myles Standish than when it was legal at total contrast. He will be very interested to see what the new recommendations are that come from the OHV enforcement group.

d. Sharl Heller, Friends of Myles Standish State Forest

- i. Ms. Heller gave her point of view on the OHV enforcement working groups and believes there is a deficit in charge #2 that fails to enforce illegal ORV use. Illegal riders scare away legitimate users. Ms. Heller feels that more education is needed and adequate enforcement laws. Ms. Heller is concerned about the strategies on enforcement or review with the working group for enforcement methods and is not sure she can support working group #2. Ms. Heller would like the opportunity to take on the task before supporting the work group. Gary Briere said there are great challenges in regards to enforcement and agrees there are inadequate enforcements. A more detailed survey or gap analysis needed through an outside source or contractor. She said the document is clear on inadequacy and will get more feeling from the working groups on enforcement to continue to work on. Councilor Crowley mentioned let's not get off the course of the goal of the committee, even though we know it is not perfect. Councilor Johnson said we can place recommendations but we have no control of the enforcement, something must be done that has to be written into law, let's get the statutes in place then move forward to the next steps. Dick mentioned maybe to add to the report the working group recognition of the enforcement issues and is outside of the working group capacity. Gary said there are a number of ways to approach this issue, ongoing education is a definite need.

e. Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhood

- i. Mr. Kaiser briefly gave a status of three bond issues. The transportation bond issue, construction bond issue and environmental bond issue. Will be lobbying on these bonds.

f. Mike Ryan, Friends of Fells

- i. Mr. Ryan followed up on the status Steve Kaiser gave. He passed out paperwork, actually a letter from the coalition. An initiative regarding the transfer of the parkways. There is a split in the administration on the decision. Friends of the Fells would like support from the council and agency regarding this possibility. Went over charges on OHV report, regarding charge #2. Mr. Ryan mentioned a meeting they had Bureau Chief Curt Rudge about enforcement and he was great, asked to create subcommittee, education is a key! Rudge really helped.

g. Renata Von Tschar, Charles River Conservancy

- i. Ms. Von Tschar voiced her concern about the transfer of the parkways. She said advocating in excessive is important and feels the Stewardship Council needs to weigh in on the guidelines. Hope to reinstate the bike groups into the active recreation.

h. Heidi Ricci, Mass. Audubon

- i. Ms. Ricci commented on topics discussed today. She is working with Sharl Heller on the new friend's network. ORV comments: Only way to get legislature to move forward and fund enforcement is for diverse groups to sign off on the reports. Mentioned the challenges of getting more information in the ORV documents.

i. Julie Crockford, Emerald Necklace Conservancy

- i. Ms. Crockford mentioned her meeting with Commissioner Sullivan before the holidays and there was assurance that there was a hold on transfers. Further advocate parkways to stay with DCR.

- VII. **Meeting Schedule** – Next meeting will be Friday, March 7, 2008 at the Wachusett Regional Headquarters, West Boylston, MA.

Meeting adjourned 15:15